

Request for Expressions of Interest

Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station – Parcel A



Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 317
Washington, DC 20004

Office of Planning of the District of Columbia
801 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20002

August 6, 2002

Responses Due: September 16, 2002

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Introduction

The Government of the District of Columbia invites parties to respond to this Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) for the development of unimproved land adjacent at the Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station. The District of Columbia purchased the subject parcel from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in January, 2002, for the express purpose of building a government occupied office building as part of the Government Centers Initiative (GCI). The continuing purpose of GCI is two fold: 1) to provide necessary administrative office space for selected government agencies; and 2) by situating these new facilities in underserved or underdeveloped neighborhoods, spur collateral economic development attributable to the introduction of additional spending power by the occupants and users of the new facilities.

The deed of conveyance contains covenants requiring WMATA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approval of any development on the subject parcel. Prior to the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the disposition of this site by either WMATA or the District, the District shall seek and receive from WMATA and the FTA all approvals, as may be required by the deed covenants, regarding the proposed use of the subject parcel. The deed also contains covenants requiring WMATA approval of construction drawings and the replacement of any WMATA facilities displaced during construction. These deed covenants were included to ensure that no construction disturbed the WMATA subway facilities on the subject parcel, which include an underground subway tunnel, an escalator entrance, an elevator shaft and vent shafts. The selected developer and/or its contractor will be required to submit construction plans to WMATA for WMATA's reasonable approval, as required in the deed covenants. The WMATA facilities will be reserved by WMATA pursuant to a grant of an easement, as required in the deed covenants.

During the development of the subject parcel as part of GCI, the District received numerous unsolicited mixed use proposals for the site from private developers, suggesting that new development potential exists that could have the same collateral benefit as the proposed government center. Currently, the District intends to build a DMV on this site. However, to fully assess new interest, the District has decided to now invite all parties to submit expressions of interest consistent with the economic development priorities and objectives of the District government.

Purpose. The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development and the Office of Planning of the District of Columbia issue this RFEI to develop the Georgia Avenue-

Petworth Metro Station consistent with the Mayor's neighborhood revitalization goals. Qualified development teams are invited to submit a response that describes the proposed use or uses, the development team and prior project experience.

After evaluating the submissions, the District will convene community workshops to share responses and confirm community priorities for the area. Successful completion of this REFI process and community planning process will likely culminate with the issuance of a Request for Proposals for the development and disposition of the site.

This RFEI does not commit the District to select any development team or to negotiate a contract, nor does it obligate the District to pay for any costs incurred in preparation and submission of proposals or costs incurred prior to entering into a formal agreement. The District reserves the right to withdraw this RFEI at any time and the right to reject any submissions in response to this RFEI at its sole discretion.

Mayor's Neighborhood Revitalization Goals. Neighborhoods are the building blocks of the future of Washington, D.C. as one magnificent city. The District's City-wide Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative embraces ten strategies to build strong, vibrant neighborhoods:

- 1) Building Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs)
- 2) Generating Quality Housing
- 3) Eliminating Blight (Home Again)
- 4) Taking Advantage of Transit (TOD)
- 5) Enhancing Neighborhood Commercial Centers (*reStore* DC)
- 6) Modernizing and Re-envisioning Schools
- 7) Creating New Neighborhoods
- 8) Partnering with Anchor Institutions
- 9) Delivering Quality Services and Public Realm (NSI)
- 10) Investing in Strategic Areas

The two most important revitalization strategies for the Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station site are *Building Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs)* and *Taking Advantage of Transit (TOD)*.

Strategy #1: Building Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs). As part of Mayor Anthony Williams' initiative to link neighborhood based planning to District budget prioritization, the Office of Planning has initiated an ambitious effort to develop Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans (SNAPs) in each of the 39 Neighborhood Clusters throughout the city. In these Plans, neighborhoods have prioritized the key issues in their neighborhoods and identified specific action steps to bring about change. The Petworth neighborhood is located in Neighborhood Cluster 18, which also includes the neighborhoods of Brightwood Park, Crestwood, and 16th Street Heights. Throughout the planning process, citizens identified three priority ingredients as vital for a livable community: 1) Clean, Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods; 2) Quality Education and Educational Facilities; and 3) Quality Neighborhood-Oriented Economic Development. Attracting quality retail businesses was among the top priorities. Specifically, citizens want to see more revitalization efforts along the Georgia Avenue corridor.

TOD in the District of Columbia is a land use strategy to accommodate new growth, strengthen neighborhoods, and expand choices and opportunities by capitalizing on bus and rail assets to stimulate and support vibrant, compact, diverse and accessible neighborhood centers within an easy walk of transit.

Strategy #4: Taking Advantage of Transit (TOD). TOD is a complementary strategy to help leverage Washington's efforts to retain, stabilize and grow its residential population; to strengthen the city's fiscal well being; and to offer a wide range of attractive mixed-income housing stock for a diverse and dynamic city. TOD integrates into and enhances existing neighborhoods, encourages compact development and offers critical services, shopping, housing, and employment near transit stations giving them convenience and creating a sense of community.

As a livability strategy, TOD helps to manage growth while preserving quality of life, fostering distinctive design and amenities. Design principles should embody preservation of the architecture and character within the neighborhood and enhance the public realm. Urban design elements should increase pedestrian safety, as well as improve built edges, public frontages and retail storefronts.

The Petworth Neighborhood and Georgia Avenue Revitalization Initiative

Neighborhood Character. The majority of the Petworth neighborhood is characterized by row houses in fair to good condition, along with scattered small- to medium-sized multi-family apartment structures. While some of the neighborhood's public and community facilities are in need of upgrade and/or expansion, there are several key facilities in the neighborhood. The area includes six recreation centers, six elementary schools, one junior high school, and one senior high school. Recent and current public facility investments include: 1) \$28.3 million for the new Barnard Elementary School currently under construction, with an anticipated completion date of December 2002; 2) \$5.2 million renovation of the Emery Recreation Center currently underway, and 3) \$3 million for a new Senior Wellness Center. Currently, there are essentially no major anchor retailers within the area, with the exception of a Safeway grocery store located at Georgia Avenue and Randolph Street. The retail mixture includes carry-out restaurants, hair and beauty shops, and gas stations.

Demographics. The Petworth neighborhood contains approximately 21,000 residents. While the majority of the neighborhood is African American (76%), over the last ten years, the neighborhood has become increasingly diverse. 19% of residents are of Hispanic origin. There are approximately 7,500 occupied housing units in the neighborhood. 58% of these units are owner-occupied. The median household income for the area is approximately \$41,000.

Georgia Avenue Revitalization Initiative. Seeing the need to encourage significant change along Georgia Avenue, in June 2000, Mayor Williams committed \$111 million to improving the entire corridor, including both portions in Wards 1 and 4. The initiative includes a variety of projects for streetscape enhancements, business services expansion, façade improvements,

housing rehabilitation and open space development. Currently, \$38.75 million in projects are underway (through Fiscal Year 2002) in Ward 4, including \$9 million in housing; \$251,200 in commercial; \$18.6 million in infrastructure; \$7.8 million in parks and recreation; \$31.3 million in public facilities; and \$35,000 in public art. An additional \$19.25 million has been allocated for projects in Fiscal Year 2003-04.

Site Profile

The Georgia Avenue-Petworth Metro Station Parcel A site is located in Square 2900. The property consists of the following nine tax lots: Lots 42, 43, 805, 806, 812, 816, 817, 818, 819, and 805. The square is bounded by Quincy Street to the north, Georgia Avenue to the east, Rock Creek Church Road to the south, and 9th Street to the west. These lots form an "L" shaped property of approximately 58,909 square feet in size (see Aerial Image).

The southern lots (Lots 42, 806, 816, 817, 818, 819, and 805) are zoned C-3-A, which is defined as moderate density shopping and service areas and permits a maximum of 4.0 residential development with a lot occupancy of 75% and up to 2.5 FAR of other permitted uses such as retail and office. Building heights are permitted up to 65 feet in height.

The northern lots (43 and 812) are split zoned with the eastern side facing Georgia Avenue zoned C-3-A and the western side facing 9th Street zoned R-4, which is defined as moderate density row houses and requires minimum lot width of 18 feet, minimum lot size of 1,800 square feet and maximum lot occupancy of 60%.

The context immediately adjacent to the Metro site includes row houses in fair to good condition on Quincy and 9th Streets and a five-story apartment building on the corner of Quincy Street and Georgia Avenue. The 3800 block of Georgia Avenue (across and just north of the subject site) contains a vacant gas station site, small businesses in one to two story buildings on small lots, two recently demolished buildings and a long-time funeral home establishment at the corner of Randolph Street and Georgia Avenue.



Submission Requirements

Respondents to this RFEI are required to submit a Letter of Interest that contains the following information by 4:00pm on September 16, 2002:

- Description of Uses. Provide a description of the proposed use or uses, including estimates of square footage or number of units per use, parking and other amenities.
- Description of Development Team. Provide a description of the Development Team, including corporate structure, partnership agreements, and description of parent companies, if applicable. Affirm that the respondent, parent companies, and related parties have not been debarred or otherwise disqualified from doing business with the

District of Columbia, the Federal Government, or any District or Federal government agencies.

- Qualifications and Experience. Describe the qualifications and experience of the development team, with particular emphasis on development and operation of uses similar to those contained in the submitted proposal. If the development team includes an architect or design consultant, include examples of representative projects.

All questions regarding this solicitation should be referred to Des Bracey of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development at (202) 727-4857. Respondents shall submit an original plus ten (10) copies of the proposal to:

Des Bracey
Special Assistant, Housing & Special Projects
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 317
Washington, DC 20004